

Bridge Boys



South Bend Community School Corp/ Dickinson Fine Arts Academy



WE ARE Dickinson Fine Arts Academy, a 5-8 Fine Arts magnet middle school serving 640 students on the western end of South Bend, IN.

OUR STUDENTS & FAMILIES Dickinson's students are 45% African-American, 24% white, 20% Hispanic, and 10% mixed race. Approximately 10% of our students are EL. Nearly all of these are Spanish-speaking. One fourth of the student population is Fine Arts magnet students from all over South Bend.

OUR TEACHERS Dickinson's academic faculty consists of 42 grade-level and Related Arts teachers. Our professional staff has received training in fine arts integration, STEAM, and gender-based learning.

OUR PROMISING PRACTICE *The Bridge Boys program's goal is to reduce the number of suspensions and expulsions among the targeted student population. Bridge Boys uses positive behavioral strategies to bridge the gap between students' achievement and family engagement. The Bridge Boys coordinator works with students and families to foster partnerships between school, home, and outside agencies and creates a culture that models and reinforces positive social behaviors. Students are provided with enrichment activities, PBIS events, life experience field trips, and other opportunities while in the program.*

OUR STEPS *Students are identified for inclusion in Bridge Boys by administration upon recommendation by teachers. Bridge Boys is a tiered program, with some students only participating after school and on Saturdays and other students, identified as needing additional support, participating in the program during the school day for a few weeks at a time. Third-tier Bridge Boys remain in the program for a full quarter, and teachers rotate into the classroom to provide intensive small group instruction to students. We are exploring multiple avenues to sustain our Bridge Boys program for the 2015-16 school year.*

OUR SOURCES *Bridge Boys who successfully complete the program show a reduced rate of suspension and/or expulsion from school, improved grades, and greater connection to the school and wider South Bend community.*

"When a kid feels as if they are considered a bad kid by society's standards or what people say we focus on re-imagining and re-channeling some of that emotion."

—Michael Boyd, Bridge Boys coordinator